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METHOD  
OF  
CONVERSING  
WITH *LJ*  
GOD.

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The Second Edition.

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Translated out of *French* by  
*I. W.* of the Society of *Iesus.*

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Non habet amaritudinem conver-  
satio illius, nec tædium con-  
victus illius. *Sapien. c. 8. v. 16.*

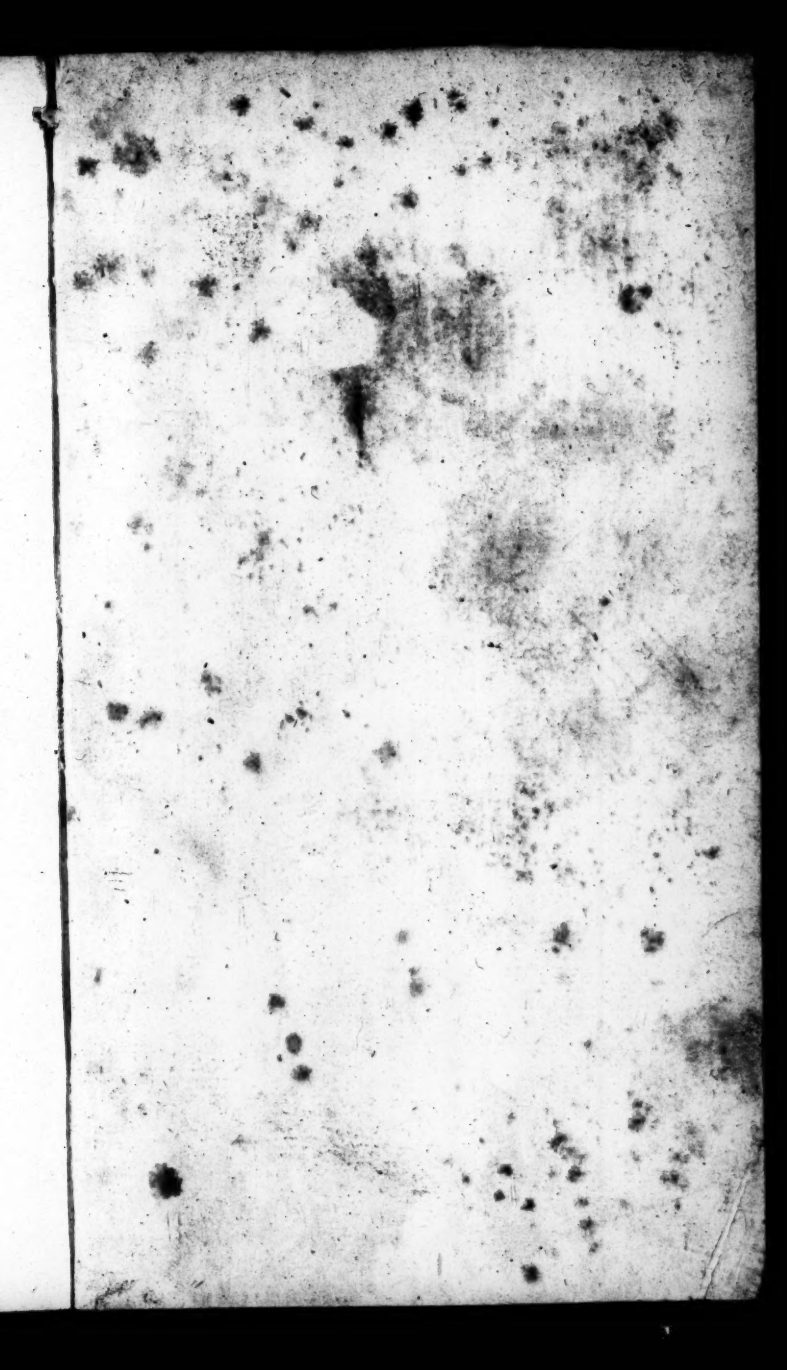
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LONDON, Printed by *Tho. Hales,*  
Anno Dom. MDCLXXXII.

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T O T H E

Very Reverend Mother

Reverend Mother, ANN  
BEDINGFIELD,  
ABBESS of the English  
POOR-CLARES at  
Graveling.

*M A D A M,*



*Have a long time  
wisht for an oc-  
casion of testifying  
to the world, the*

A 2

*sense*

## The Epistle

sense I have of my obligations to your self, and your most Religious Community; for your and their many favours to me, and my Relations: But had not Gratitude requir'd any return I could make, Justice would have exacted this; since this Second Edition owes it's being to your liberal Contribution; please therefore to accept what is already your own, and what indeed were not worth presenting you, did not you make it so by your approve; which I do not wonder at, since all are pleas'd to Read,  
what

## Dedicatory.

what they delight to Practice;  
and there can be nothing but  
that constant Union and Con-  
versation you have with God,  
(of which this Treatise is but  
a faint Idea) that is able to  
produce that stupendious chear-  
fulness wherewith your whole  
Community suffers those Au-  
sterities you have undertaken  
for his Love; which, all that  
converse with you, wonder at,  
conceiving it a kind of Stand-  
ing Miracle, that your ten-  
der Sex, whose Birth and  
Education had not inur'd you  
to such hardships as you day-  
ly undergo, should be able to  
bear

## The Epistle

bear them, especially with such a chearfulness, as even animates those that converse with you to follow your example. They see indeed your Mortifications, but could they have a knowledge of those Sacred Vnctions wherewith the Holy Ghost sweetens them, during your Pious Conversation with him, they would no longer wonder at your so chearful suffering them, but be in pain not to suffer also, and desire as earnestly as St. Teresa did, Either to Die or Suffer, which is the best expression of Love, or Vnion.

VVhere-



## Dedicatory.

Wherefore, if they desire to know how they may compass this happiness, they admire and you enjoy; this Treatise will teach them, and if they practice what it teaches, I dare promise them they shall experience the same happiness you enjoy. Wherefore amidst those Pious Entertainments, which pass between your Spouse and your Selves, please to beg of him, both for the Reader and my Self, such a faithful imitation of your Pious examples, as may afford us the like comfortable effects, whereby you will

**The Epistle, &c.**

*will infinitely add to the  
many obligations you and  
they have already confer'd  
upon.*

**MADAM,**

**Your most Humble  
and Obedient  
Servant.**

**I. W.**

I

A  
METHOD  
OF  
Conversing with GOD.

---

Non habet amaritudinem conversatio illius, nec tedium convictus illius.

*His Conversation has no Bitterness, nor his Company any Tedioufness. Sapien. c. 8. v. 16.*

---

*Introduction.*

**O**VR Conversations  
with one another,  
tho' necessary for  
the Entertainment of our  
B Mind,

2      *A Method of*

Mind, yet have often Inconveniencies, Disgraces, and Discontents that accompany them; or, at least are subject to two troublesome Accidents, the one, that ordinarily they displease us, and become painful and insupportable, there being nothing that wearies us sooner, or becomes more tedious, than to be obliged to harken to, and to entertain others: The other is still worse, that when these Conversations please us, they are  
ge-

*Conversing with God.* 3

generally Criminal, and most commonly we return with wounded Consciences, and such Imperfections as we carried not with us.

Conversation with God is free from these two dangers, neither sin nor wearisomness accompany it; Innocence and Ioy are the constant Companions of this Spiritual Happiness.

If you desire to know it by your own Experience, do what the Holy Ghost and the Divine Wisdom

Inspire in their own words,  
which I am about to propose  
to you, and regulate  
your self according to the  
Examples they invite you  
to imitate.

---

CHAP. I.

*In what this Conversation  
consists.*

**G**OD loves you, love  
Him; His delight  
is to converse with you, let  
yours be to converse with  
him, and to spend your  
Time, as you will spend  
your

*Conversing with God.* 5

your Eternity, in his amiable Company.

Accustom your self to speak familiarly and confidently to him as to a Friend, and reflect that 'tis an error and weakness of our blinded Nature, not to be free in his Presence, and not to appear before him, but as Slaves trembling with Shame and Fear before a Prince, thinking of nothing else, but searching Comfort, and Liberty elsewhere.

B 3

You

You are not desired by an Extatick Prayer, or a violent Application of your Imagination, that you form to your self a Figure of his Adorable Person, and that Prostrat in Spirit before this imaginary Figure, you forget your Self and your Domestick Affairs, and that you spend the day in Contemplating and Praising his Greatness.

No, we speak here only of a familiar Entertainment, and desire nothing else, but that, without quitting your ordinary Employments,



ployments, you carry your self after the same manner towards God, as in the like occasions you are wont to do, to those that love you, and you love. He is present with you as they are; speak to him as you would to them, entertain him about your Concerns, about your Designs, propose your Hopes and Fears to him, and do this with Confidence and an open Heart; for Reservedness and Silence is very displeasing to him in his Saints: The Soul that has no-  
B. 4 thing

thing to say to him, is like the little Sister of the *Sunamite*, which is not yet of Age to be one of the number of his Spoutes, and to be tenderly loved by him.

One of the first Lessons of a Spiritual Life is, that God who is the most Powerful and Formidable of all Masters, when he commands, desires to be Treated as the most Familiar Friend when he loves; and that during these solitary Conversations with the Persons he chooses, the least of all  
Crea-

*Conversing with God.* 9

Creatures, is not too little, or too contemptible in his sight, unless she has not yet learn'd the manner of *Conversing* with him, heart to heart, and amourously discovering to him her most hidden thoughts.

True it is, that he ought always to be *Sovereignly* respected; but when he does you the favour to *Visit* you, and by an *Interior* motion of your Soul, makes you sensible of his *Presence*; the greatest *Honour* he requires from you,

B 5 is,

is, to Entertain and Discourse with him, as with one you love, with all Liberty, Confidence, and Tenderness.

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## C H A P. II.

*That GOD is every where.*

**T**Is to receive this Honour, says the Prophet, that without expecting your coming to him, as soon as he perceives that you desire to call him, he prevents you and presents himself to you,

*Conversing with God.* 11

you, with his Hands full of Grace, and Remedies proper for all the ailments you are wont to complain of; He attends only till you speak to him to make you sensible that he is always near you, and ready to hear and comfort you.

Whereupon take notice that though God is every where, and in all Persons throughout the World by the Extent of his Immen-  
sity, and by the Operations of his Power as Creator; yet there are two places in which he inhabits

bits as in his own House, which he designs and makes choice of for his chief Abode. The One is the Imperial Heaven, where he is present by the Emanations of his Glory, Communicated to the Angels and Saints: Th'other upon Earth, in the Souls of the Humble and Predestinate, where he is present by his Grace and the most Divine Operations of the Holy Ghost, who restores to them the Antient Paradise in their Deserts, Dwelling in Eternity,

*Conversing with God.* 13

nity, says one Prophet, and  
Inhabiting in a Humble and  
Contrite Heart, says ano-  
ther. 'Tis God that dwells  
on high in the sublimity  
of Eternity, and at the  
same time so low, as in  
the Solitude of Saints, in  
their Grots, Tabernacles,  
and Cels; where he pas-  
ses the whole day, Enter-  
taining himself with them.  
*Alas, what Joys! VVhat  
Heavenly Consolations!* says  
Job, reflecting upon these  
Antient and Happy years  
of his Conversation with  
God, *VVhen God was secret-  
ly*

14 *A Method of*  
*ly in my Tabernacle, when*  
*the Omnipotent was with*  
*me: In a word, he is with*  
*thee, O Devout Soul, an*  
*inseparable, and the only*  
*Faithful Companion a-*  
*mongst Friends.*

---

C H A P. III.

*God is at all times Present.*

**O**Thers have Hours  
of Separation, there  
is no separation from  
God, all times are proper  
to make Holy Love to  
him, *When the Sun retires,*  
says



*Conversing with God.* 15  
says Salomon, he retires not;  
in the Night he remains  
by your Pillow, to enter-  
tain you in the silence of  
the Night by his secret  
Inspirations, and to help  
you to make a Holy and  
Sweet Repose amidst the  
Sweetnesses and Celesti-  
al Pleasures of this Inte-  
rior Conversation.

He is present also when  
you wake in the Morn-  
ing, to hear from your  
Mouth a word of Confi-  
dence, and to become  
the Depository of your  
first Cares each day; but  
since

since he fails not to be present when you wake, fail not on your part, to behold him, and to stretch out your Armes to Embrace him, tell him with his beloved Spouse in the *CANTICLES*, how your thoughts have been taken up with him in the Night; in what pain you have been for his absence; what Tears you have shed when you thought of your ingratitude, that constrained him to give ear to his justice, and to leave you; say with her, I desired you,

I ran after you in the Deserts, where I saw nothing but Darkness; but *in my Spirit, and from the bottom of my Heart, I will rejoyce in the Morning to find you.* Doubt not O Divine Saviour, but that I am yours, since that you see the first motion of my heart after my being my self, is to rejoyce at the happy News that you still love me; and that you are not so far from me as my faults have merited, and my fears have imagined.

## C H A P. IV.

*That God is most particularly present to us when we are so to him.*

**N**O certainly, Devout Soul, he is not far off, he is where you are, and there is nothing in this World so near you as this inseparable lover of yours. But take care you forget not he is so, as the greatest part of the World do, and let no day or hour pass without beholding him, thinking of him, or speaking  
ing

*Conversing with God.* 19

ing to him. Entertain him with some discourse, if you have any Devotion, neither matter, nor words will be wanting ; tell him what you know of your self and your Family, and what you would tell a Friend that came to visit you. As Great a God as he is, he looks upon what you tell him, as a thing of importance, because he loves you, and because there is nothing concerns you which Love makes not his Interest.

Look

Look not upon him as a King, that contemns a Soul which has not Kingly thoughts, and is not able to entertain him with great Matters; or as one that is afraid to abase himself by harkening to your little Household Affairs, or to what passes in the Conscience of a poor petty Creature.

'Tis true as St. Chrysostom says, *That the care of God in Heaven, and upon the Throne of his Empire, is to think on the Angels and Saints, and upon the great*

*Conversing with God.* 21

great Design of his Heavenly Wisdom; but when he is with you, when he is in your Closet, his only care is to think on you, all the Application of his Providence and Love regards your particular Interest: When he is with you, and in such places where you are alone, with him, he is God as I may say, for you alone, he is there Omnipotent only to help you, he is all Goodness and Beauty only to be loved by you, and to draw you to a Confidence  
in

in him, and love of him, and to present you an occasion of telling him what afflicts you, and in what State or Condition your Family is, and to inform him how things go in your charge or employment, as also to manifest the Interiour of your Soul to him; Tell him then, with Love and Sincerity, all that you know: Reveal your ways unto our Lord, and beg his direction in them, and make known all your Counsels to him.



C H A P. V.

*That God makes himself Ignorant of what we do not impart to Him.*

**T**ELL me not that he already knows all you can say, because he is God, and knows all things; But take notice, that by the Law of his Divine Wisdom, he will have all things he knows pass as unknown to him, without approving them, pleasing himself in them, co-operating with them, or taking

taking care of bringing them to an Happy issue, unless you your self make them known to him.

There are Tears pour'd forth in abundance in his Presence, yet he sees them not; such are the Tears of Hypocritical Penitents: There are Persons also that he Swears he knows not; *Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.* There are Affairs also he knows nothing of, and these are even your own, when you say nothing to him of them, your Silence which  
hides

*Conversing with God.* 25

hides them from him, makes them as unknown to him, and that he has no design by the blessing of his Providence, to give a good success to them. Whilst you relate your dissatisfactions and troubles to Men, and say nothing to God, they know what you say, but God knows nothing of it.

God as Great and Omniscient as he was, knew not, that is, would not know, that *Lazarus* was sick, till *St. Mary Magdalen* gave him notice of it :

C

You

You are Indisposed, you are Afflicted, and Pursued by your Creditors, you follow a business of Importance, you want good Council and the assistance of a powerful Friend; our Saviour knows nothing of all this; if you would have it come to his knowledge, he must know it from your self; 'tis a secret Law his Love prescribes him which he will not fail to observe.

For as much also as concerns other Afflictions, God knows them  
not

*Conversing with God.* 27

not so long as you say nothing of them ; wherefore Devout Soul, keep no longer silence in his presence ; as soon as any Disgrace, or cross Accident arrives, with humility and respect make your Complaint to him ; if your Confidence be great, 'tis not necessary to beg his Assistance in express terms, it sufficeth with *St. Mary Magdalen* to present your Affliction before his Eyes so that he has notice of it, *Behold O Lord, how I am Afflicted.* He takes pleasure

to behold an Afflicted heart, and to comfort it. Discover yours to him, and let him see all the disquiet and bitterness within it; discover all the motions of your disturbed Thoughts from fear or sadness. I am full of Bitterness, my heart is even drown'd with sadness; behold me lost and overwhelmed in an Abyss of Misery; Dangers and Darkness have surrounded me, I have nothing to say to you, since your Mercy sees my Grief and my

*Conversing with God.* 29

my Tears ; and that all  
my Hope is in you alone :  
Ask your Mercy O God,  
what it ought to do, ask  
your Love the same que-  
stion, and then do what  
you please.

---

C 3

CHAP.

## C H A P. VI.

*That God condescends to our weakness, in permitting us to seek Comfort from Creatures, that finding none in them, we may more earnestly return to Him.*

**H**E is not angry, as I have said elsewhere; that during these troubles, you Address your self to Creatures to be comforted by them; but when they have neither Power nor Will to assist



*Conversing with God.* 31

assist you, it is his Pleasure that you come and make your complaint to him of it, and in his Arms blame their weakness or ingratitude: My Friends have nothing but words, 'tis to you therefore, O Divine Saviour, that I come to manifest my pain, and to address my Tears. And do not only make complaint of the things that trouble you, but as soon as you have received any News that pleases you, comforts you, and causes hope and joy

to spring up in your heart, do what Fidelity and Friendship requires; run presently to him you love, who expects you, tell him the News, and add that it is your greatest comfort, that this Charitable Care and Fatherly Bounty of his, is a Mark that he is pleased with you. For this reason my Heart rejoyceth, and my Tongue exults; I will rejoyce in God my Savior, and sing to him because he has bestowed Good things upon me.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

*'Tis not displeasing to God  
to relate our Imperfecti-  
ons to Him.*

**T**Is another Mark of  
Confidence that  
pleases Extreamly this  
Dear and Devout Spouse,  
to trust him with the  
knowledge of your Faults,  
even before you make  
your appearance before  
your Confessours Tribu-  
nal, and acquit your self of  
your Duty of Pennance.  
Come and declare to this

C 5      Amiable

Aimable Confident, what has happened to you, and say with *David*, I have sinned very much in this Action, and have done very foolishly; my God I have just now spoke an indiscreet word, I have done a most unworthy Action, and such an one, as may be the occasion of great Disorder; I know not what blindness shut my Eyes and caused me to fall into this sin; in truth I am very much ashamed of it, and afflicted for it, but that which troubles  
me

*Conversing with God.* 35

me most, and renders me comfortless, is, that you are offended. Nevertheless, if I have been less Prudent, you are not the less Merciful, or less sensible of my Tears; I behold a tender compassion, in your Eyes, where I see your wonted Bounty; methinks I feel that Love in your Heart, which is the Joy and Comfort of my Life: Look and make Experiment of it your self, and you will find, that notwithstanding my ingratitude, the flames  
of

of your Charity are not yet extinguished, and that you are the same to day, you were from all Eternity ; Sweet, Meek, and abounding in Mercy.

---

C H A P. VIII.

*How we are to lay open our  
Daily Infirmities before  
Almighty GOD.*

**V**Pon occasion of these light and ordinary faults that often happen, and almost every hour, beg of him, that he would

*Conversing with God.* 37

would not forget what he knows better than you, to wit, that you are an infamous sinner, and like an infant, subject to continual falls, tho' his Fatherly goodness seems not to permit him to be angry with you.

Represent before him, that a Son and Heir of two years old, the Hopes and Darling of the Family, is not less pleasing to his Mother when he falls, then when he stands on his feet, but the contrary; for then it is that she takes  
him

him up, and more tenderly cherishes him. Tell him that it is the Nature of Step-Mothers to be angry, or correct their little Children, because they fall, a true compassionate Mother, of which he will bear the Name, as soon as she sees her Child fallen, runs to help him up with a Motherly affection, and instead of Rigour and Threats, hides him in her Bosom, Flatters, and Embraces him; and endeavours by her Kisses and Caresses, to assuage his Pain,



Pain, and to hinder him from crying and afflicting himself.

Great God, you give me the Name of your little One, which you hold on your Knees, or lead by the Hand to teach me to go. Behold what I am, and when I Fall, see what you ought to be, and what your Goodness requires of you.

'Tis true my most dear Father, and even this very day in your Presence, notwithstanding my many Resolutions and Promises,  
I

I am fallen into my daily and wonted Imperfections. Yet be not angry with me, I have reason indeed to cry and be afflicted; this belongs to me, but it belongs to you my Beloved to give me your Hand to help me up, to take me into your Armes, to dry up my Tears to dissipate my Disquiets and Fears, and to assure me that you still Love me, and cease not to be my God.

I do not deny, but you have a great deal of reason to complain, that after so  
many

many Confessions made, so many Pardons and Favors received, you see me fall into such frequent Relapses: Yet methinks, you have a great deal of reason to excuse in me these unavoidable Weaknesses; or at least, if you are angry or displeas'd with them, to let your anger fall upon my Parents, who conceiv'd me in Ignorance, and gave me their Sin in part of my Being.

Alas, Divine Saviour, vouchsafe but a little to regard what is in me, and  
what

what I am, what an Heart has been bestowed on me; and what Blood has been made use of to form a Creature, that ought to be as pure and impeccable, as the Angels: As soon as I sprung out of nothing, you refus'd me, what is most Holy, your Grace, without which I was born. My Parents gave me only of their own, what was most impure.

I received of you a Soul, which immediatly was infected with Sin, before it was at my Disposal; and  
of

of them a Body, already tainted with Corruption and bad Inclinations: And since I became so miserable without my actual Concurrence, there seemeth to be some little reason, why you should grant Pardon for those Imperfections which naturally flow from so bad a Source.

I should be to blame notwithstanding, should I demand, that your infinite Sanctity should not regard my Failings with displeasure: I am displeas'd with them my self, and suffer  
most

most sorrowful Regrets  
and Remorses for them.

I tell you however, what  
I do to comfort my self,  
and what in my opinion  
you should do, to appease  
your anger, and to have  
towards me no other Sen-  
timents but of Compassion  
and no other designs but  
of Mercy.

For my part, O my  
God, at the very moment  
I have Sinned, I look up-  
on you in the same State  
and Condition, you were  
in on Mount *Calvary*,  
where you thought of no-  
thing

thing but of Pardoning,  
and blotting out of Sins,  
and searching out Sin-  
ners throughout the whole  
World, to wash them in  
your most precious Blood.  
This is that, which I be-  
hold, and this makes me  
run to you: O adorable  
Mercy, behold here the  
Sinner, you seek after.

For your part, O my  
God, in the same moment  
you see me fallen, behold  
me in the same state, in  
which, by your Mercy, I  
hope to be one day in Hea-  
ven, where I shall think of  
nothing

nothing else, but loving you: When you behold me here below, you see a Person, who, during thirty or forty years of his Life, passes not one day, nay perhaps not one hour, without Offending you by some Fault or other. But when you behold me in Paradise, you behold a Saint, that passes millions of Years and Ages; nay an intire Eternity, without offending you so much as once, and that ceases not each moment of this long Eternity, to Glorifie, and  
Love



Love you: Look upon me then in this state, and be not angry, to see me upon Earth for fifty or sixty years, that is, two or three Minutes in respect of Eternity, to be the subject of frailty & frequent failings.

---

C H A P. IX.

*How to make your Applications to God in ordinary Doubts and Difficulties.*

**R**Emember to acquit your self of this Duty of Confidence, of which

which I speak, in the occasions, where you ought to deliberate upon some unforeseen event, or of some difficulty, that troubles you; where you cannot well perceive, what you are to do, nor what Resolutions you are to take. Give, O Lord, a word in my Mouth and counsel in my Heart. Send forth, O my God, your light, to direct me. By some mark of your Wisdom teach my Soul, what to Answer, what 'tis to do in this conjuncture, and which is the best

best means of those, that occur to me; or, that my Friends propose, direct my Path, and permit me not to go astray. I see a great many Advises, but I desire to know, which is yours; give me a knowledge of it, and with your Hand direct, and guide my Inclinations to bend that way, you direct, and to pitch upon the choice, you inspire. I cannot but act prudently, and prosperously, whilst the splendour of your Wisdom shines upon me, to direct

D

me

me in the Darkness I am in, when your Light shines upon my Head, by it I shall walk securely, in the midst of Darkness.

In a word, Live in a continual exercise and communication with God; look upon him no otherwise, than a powerful and faithful Friend, who is night and day by your side. Have with him, as I have said, the most free and amorous Familiarity you can, confiding even your Diffidences and Fears to him; as also your  
most

*Conversing with God.* 51

most hidden Weaknesses,  
all your Thoughts, and  
Desires; and the different  
Motions of your irreso-  
lute Prudence, or your  
secret Disquiets. Before  
thee, O God, is all my  
Desire, and my Groans  
are not hid from thee.

---

D 2      C H A P.

## C H A P. X.

*He is not displeas'd with every Complaint to him of himself; and in what manner we may do it.*

**G**OD is so well pleas'd that you should speak to him in a Familiar and Friendly manner, that though you should have a mind now and then, even to complain of his own Providence, and of that Severity wherewith he seems to treat you, he will not be

be angry at it; provided  
it be done in an Amo-  
rous and Respectful way.  
When you are over-  
whelm'd with Grief, and  
can receive no Answer to  
your Prayers; you may  
imitate our Blessed Sa-  
viour on the Cross, and  
lovingly Cry out unto  
him, *My God, my God,*  
*why hast thou forsaken me?*  
You may say with Da-  
vid, *why, O Lord, have you*  
*gone from me, and do de-*  
*sprise me in the occasion?*  
What is this, O my  
God, that you know  
D 3 me

me not, when I weep;  
and withdraw your self  
from me, whilst I am  
bath'd in Tears, and  
have most need of your  
Comfort, and your help-  
ing hand, &c.

I cry unto you, and  
you hear me not; I  
stand before you, and  
you behold me not;  
you are chang'd and be-  
come cruel towards me.  
Where are you, O my  
Divine Saviour? Where  
is your Mercy? Where  
is your Love? I call you,  
and you answer me not;  
I



I cry out as loud, as I am able, and you do not hear me: I make known the grief that oppresses me, and the deplorable condition I am in, and you turn your face from me, and will not behold me.

But after these pious Complaints, fail not to return to your Sentiments of Confidence, and Humility: Yet, O Lord, you do not stretch out your Hand to consume me. Tho', great God, you are angry, yet

I perceive, your design is not to destroy me; all these blows from your Hands are favourable strokes, and presage my Happiness. 'Tis your Goodness, is the cause of my Suffering; the more I suffer, the more I am assur'd of your Love, and that your Providence hath secret Thoughts, and designs of Love towards me; which, when I least hope for them, will comfort me and surpass my desires. Behold thou art our God, we expected thee,

*Conversing with God.* 57  
thee, and thou shalt save  
us, we waited, and we  
shall exult, and rejoyce in  
thy Salvation.

---

D 5 CHAP.

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## C H A P. XI.

*We are to represent the Afflictions of others unto God, as well as our own.*

**Y**OU do well to think of your Troubles and Pains, when you are in his presence; but think also of those, that others suffer. Tell him the News of those, you know, and endeavour to draw some Grace and Mercy from his Heart for the Comfort of such, as according to the *Prophet*, are  
nourish'd

*Conversing with God.* 59

nourish'd upon Earth with the Bread of Tears; their Misery is the ordinary subject of discourse; they talk and make complaint of it in all Companies; but the complaints they make, profit them very little. They will do them service, Devout Soul, when in your familiar Entertainments you make them, and recount them to God; telling him the Poverty and Miseries, you know are in several Families. In Truth, my dear Master, I can go  
no

no where, but I find some Tears, and I may say with Truth, that from the time, I knew, and began to converse with Men, I have scarce known one without a complaint, and whom I have not beheld to shed just Tears of grief. It seems to me, I am born only to behold Afflictions, and afflicted People, and to behold them with a seeming Cruelty, not being able to help them.

This want of Power,  
O my God, is in effect  
one

*Conversing with God.* 61

one of the saddest Afflictions, I suffer in this miserable Life, as often as I see such Creatures, as belong to you, and are dear to you, to come, and with Tears to bewail their miseries before my eyes; and that I am forc'd to abandon them as others do, and to tell them, expect nothing from me, 'tis impossible for me to help you.

I speak sincerely, that for these thirty or forty years, that every day I have beheld sad objects of compassion I remember  
not

not to have been able to make one of them happy, nor to send him away with that comfort, he desired.

It would be, my dear Spouse, an enormous crime, and a detestable hardness of heart, to be insensible of their pains; but 'tis a great misery to feel them, and not be able at all to help them, or comfort them.

Many Holy Persons go to the Rich and Happy in the World, to beg Charities, and to gather Alms,  
to



*Conversing with God.* 63

to carry to the Sick and Shame-fac'd Poor, whom they know. I do the same, and at present I, who speak to you, seek help and comfort for them; but 'tis to you, my beloved, I address my self; you have you hands full of Comforts, and Benedictions, necessary for them. I offer up my hands to receive them, in Adoration of you, casting my self at your feet. Suffer me not, O God, to rise without obtaining some Grace in their favour.

your? Send your Elect to them, to carry your Charities, or to tell them some welcom News, that may draw them out of the Abyss of Sadness, in which they are, and may unexpectedly make them revive.

I have, O my God, everlasting infinite Obligations to you. You know, every hour my heart is in pain, how it may make thankful Returns for your Favours, using the words of the Royal Prophet, *What shall*

*I return unto the Lord, for all his Benefits bestowed upon me? And your ordinary answer to me, is, That whatsoever I do to any, that is in sufferance, you take it as done to your self; and retain as grateful a resentment of it, as if the Afflictions were your own, as if you alone receiv'd the Comfort. Bestow upon me therefore, what you would have me give them, and permit me not to be any longer so unhappy, as to behold my God in Afflictions*  
and

and suffering all the Miseries, the Necessitous undergo, as well as the Sick, and Prisoners, and not to be able to help him.

My dear Creator, you say unto me, behold your Brother, your Sister, that languish upon Straw, and want assistance. Behold other Souls, suffering Sadness, and Despair, who call you to help them; and I answer you, O my God, in tears, give what you command me to do, and command what you please.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

*We are to have recourse to God, no less in Prosperity, than in Adversity.*

**T**Is ordinary enough for Devout Souls, nay almost all Christians, to have Recourse, and speak to God in their Afflictions, and to pass whole hours with him in time of trouble; but 'tis as ordinary, that they forget their Duty in time of Prosperity. Forget not yours, O Faithful *Sunamite*, says St. Bernard,

*Bernard*, and do not imitate the Examples of ingratitude, which appear in the lives of most Men; nay, even in some of your Companions, how spiritual and scrupulous soever they may seem to be in other occasions.

'Tis a strange thing, that, when our Designs prosper, and that we are happy, one of our most sensible joys is to acquaint our Friend with it; and yet notwithstanding, as Devout as we are, we neglect to tell God,  
and

*Conversing with God.* 69

and thereby to receive the most sweet and holy Comfort, that can be drawn out of the happiness of this miserable life. That is, to entertain our selves with our amiable Benefactor, and to testify to him our sense, and grateful acknowledgment for his Favours.

You, who love your Duty, testify yours after the most faithful and sincere manner you are able, give him an account of the happy state of your Affairs, of the success of  
your

your Labour, and of your Conduct, being enlightened by his Charity.

Speak to him each thing, as the *Sunamite* did, lead him amongst your Treasures, shew him all, you possess through the greatness of his Liberality and Favour towards you. *My Beloved*, says she, Behold here the Fruits at our Gates and within our Inclosures; wheresoever I cast my eyes, I see nothing but Abundance and Fruitfulness, and the Branches charg'd with your Benedictions and Presents.

*VVhat*



Conversing with God. 71

*What a Sweetness my dear Spouse, what a Plenty have you pour'd down upon our Fruit-trees ! What Riches are heap'd together by your Providence and Love ! 'Tis you, that made the Corn and Fruit to grow, and are cause of that plentiful Harvest of our Neighbouring Fields. You are the Inventor and Origine of this Multitude of Conveniencies, that sustain our Life, and comfort us here below.*

I receive them only, to return them to you. For by receiving Temporal  
Be-

Benefits, we ought to perform two things, *to wit*, Praise you, and Love you.

The use, because you will have it so, shall be for us, but the Honour and Love for you alone. I will therefore say, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto thy Name be all Honour and Glory.* The Glory of so great prosperity is only due to God: Neither my hands, nor the hands of any Creature have produc'd it, and therefore none shall share in

*Conversing with God.* 73

in his Praise or Love : I owe nothing to any, but himself; nay, I will not so much as love his Gifts or Liberalities, as precious as they are : I ought to receive and possess the Gifts, but I ought to Love nothing but the Giver.

You, my God, who know all things; know, that they are not your Presents, which make me Happy. I have a thousand times told you, what I now repeat, that amidst all the Riches, and all the Felicities; and amidst all  
E the

the Worlds, you can Create; there is nothing, that I can or will Love, but you. My Love is only yours, and you alone shall be eternally the God of my Heart, and my everlasting Inheritance.

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C H A P.

C H A P. XIII

*Our Imperfections in our Devotions ought not to hinder a confident recourse to him.*

**A**Pply your self with particular care to speak to him most familiarly, and freely, when that happens to you, which is but too ordinary in the exercises of a devout Life, to wit, when you find in your Soul certain negligences, and discouragements, as Spiritual tediousness,

wearisomness, and disgust, of which you know not any cause, such as *David* complain'd of saying, *My Soul is dry'd up within me.* I cannot tell you, O my God, how I am, nor in what condition I find my self; My Soul is much out of order: Nothing relishes with it, nothing can please it: Nay, 'tis as displeasing to it self, as other things are: Nay, it seems, as if you were no longer pleasing to it, or at least I cannot bring it at present, to make so much

much as one act of Love or Adoration. I say my Prayers without any Devotion, and with a shameful Negligence. It is not possible for me in your Presence to keep my self with that Duty, and Respect, I ought; nor to free my self from that Drowsiness and Laziness, that even makes me sleep at your feet, instead of hearkening to you; as *David* said, *My Soul out of Tediouſness, even slept within me.*

I know not, whence  
this humour proceeds; yet  
I know, 'tis displeasing to  
you, and that it offends  
you: And you know, 'tis  
displeasing to me also, and  
that 'tis a great pain and  
confusion to me, to find  
my self in this condition.  
But that, which comforts  
me, is, that in your words  
you carry my Cure. If you  
have compassion of my  
infirmity, speak, and Cure  
me: Confirm me in your  
Words. Remember, O  
admirable Omnipotence,  
that of my self I am no-  
thing



thing but Weakness and Misery; all my force depends on your Lips, and proceeds from your Eyes. Look upon me, O Divine Saviour, and speak but a word: Life, Courage, and Grace will enter with your Words, and will give a new Birth to my Soul; Which is truly entomb'd, whilst 'tis thus asleep, and in a manner bury'd in its Body by Sloth. *My Soul slept out of Sloth, confirm me in your Words,* said the Royal Prophet.

## C H A P. XIV.

*How multiplicity of Business is no hindrance to this Conversation.*

**O**ther times happen, very different from these, but no less troublesome, and as contrary to the design you ought to have, of keeping your Soul always in Peace, and present to God, and not permitting it to be carry'd away from him, either by disquiet or di-

distraction. 'Tis, when the multitude of Affairs oblige us, as they did *St. Martha*, to deprive ourselves of *St. Mary Magdalens* Happiness, and to run to and fro, and to cast our Eyes and Thoughts in every corner of the House, to take care of an infinite number of Things. For how is it possible at such a time, whilst our minds are taken up with so many Affairs, and about the conduct of so many Persons, to remain at the

Feet of our Saviour, and to possess with repose the comfort of his Entertainments ?

Yes, devout Soul, 'tis possible. Without doubt you may do it as easily, as the *Sunamite*, who gives an example very sweet, and easie to follow, during the heat of your Affairs, and the multitude of your Domestick Employments.

See what she doth, and you'l confess, 'tis an inexcusable error to believe, that the business  
you

*Conversing with God.* 83

you are imploy'd in by Duty, and by Gods command, should constrain you to forget your self, or God. For if, whilst you are acting, your actions do not hinder you from speaking about your business, to the Persons you deal withal; why should they hinder you from speaking to him you love, or from doing, as the Laborious Spouse did, even upon the day of her greatest Imployment, when she was oblig'd to give orders to the great number of her

Do-

Domesticks, and by her vigilance to keep them assiduous to their works. Behold her, I say, and Judge, whether the repose of a contemplative, be more agreeable than this her holy and active Life? *Let us rise this Morning, says she getting up, let us rise, and go to the Vineyards, let us see, whether the Vines have Flower'd, and if the Flowers bring forth Fruit, whether the Peaches have budded. My dear Master, 'tis time to go to work, and*

*Conversing with God.* 85

and to think of our business, but do not leave me alone, amidst the labours.

I fear them not, how great soever they are, so they separate me not from you, and that, so long as I work, you keep my eyes and my thoughts inseparably fix'd upon your presence, and fast ty'd to your heart. Let us go together, and take a walk about our Close; let us behold the Vineyards, in what condition they are, and whether they are advanc'd, as they ought

ought to be, in so favourable a season. Let us visit our Nursery, and see, whether the Trees prosper, and whether our Plants thrive; let us visit our Farm, and see whether the Labourers mind their Work; whether the Shepherds are vigilant, and whether the Servants and other Officers do their Duty: Let us go and give Order, that each one take care of his work, and be employ'd, as he ought.

But



*Conversing with God.* 87

But one thing more yet my Beloved, do not leave me, for nothing can be troublesom, or incommode me, whilst you are present to my mind, and whilst I hearken to your Voice, Speak to my Soul, whilst my Body is employ'd in your Service, and in regulating the Family, which you are pleas'd to confide to my Care, and Conduct.

When being at work, we speak to God of what we are about, the work is no more a distraction,  
but

but a Devotion of great merit. Devout *Martha*, who thinks of Temporal Affairs, and has all the cares of the House upon her, is not disturb'd, but rather comforted, by complaining to her Saviour, and making every thing that happens, an occasion of speaking to him: ever, telling him that it is for him, she labours, and that she is happy to labour, and tire out herself, whilst he beholds her.

Do

Do not doubt, when in the midst of a multitude of Employments, you remember to say to our Lord, what you say to others, *to wit*, that you are even overwhelmed with them, and that you Communicate to him with Confidence such thoughts, as this Turmoil occasions; but that all your Distractions will immediately change into so many Acts of Divine Love. The contemplative *Magdalens* may perhaps have more sweetness, but they cannot

not have more Merit.

A Soul, that withdraws  
not her self from God,  
whilst she walks or runs  
about the streets, is far  
better, than she, that lets,  
her Thoughts wander  
whilst she is at her  
Prayers.

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**C H A P.**

C H A P. XV. .

*The greater familiarity you  
use with God, the more  
pleasing 'tis to him.*

**I**N fine, speak to him  
of all things, which  
you speak of to your self;  
and do it after such a  
manner, as Love shall  
suggest.

At least imprint this  
maxim deeply in your  
Heart, that as you have  
not a Master, whom  
you ought to Fear and  
Respect as God: So  
you

you have not a Friend, be it Brother or Sister, to whom you may speak with that Liberty and Confidence, as to him.

They, that imagine freedom of Speech with him to be against the Law of Worship and Submission, due to his Presence, and his Divine Majesty are much deceived.

Many are apt to believe, that, what Ghostly Fathers say in this particular, are only thoughts of their Simplicity, contrary

*Conversing with God.* 93

trary to serious and solid Devotion, and to that Holy Doctrin, which condemns as *Illusion* and Irreverence, all these pretended Confidences, and seeming bold and Presumptuous Conversations with God; affirming, that we are in his sight but Dust and Ashes, and that in his Presence only Thoughts of profound Humility and Annihilation, and Devotions tending thereunto, are to take place.

But

But alas ! How feeble and weak do these pretended Devotes shew themselves, whilst they think, they speak very solidly. They understand very little, in what the greatness of God consists, and are far from conceiving, that mortal and earthly Greatness is very small, and inconsiderable, and infinitely less than that of GOD, because it cannot suit, or equal it self to little things, when Wisdom and Love obliges it so to do. Take



*Conversing with God.* 95

Take notice, if you please, that the Immen-  
sity of God, infinitely  
surpasses other Immen-  
sities, and that it alone is  
Divine and Sovereign,  
because at the same time  
it is of greater extent than  
the World; it is also as  
little, as the least Crea-  
ture; and that 'tis as in-  
tirely in a little Flower;  
as in the whole Universe,  
and in the Imperial Hea-  
ven; *πλεον & σύμμετρον*, says  
a Holy Father of him,  
*God is greater than all, and  
equal to all.*

Me-

Meditate but a little,  
Devout Soul, on this  
Truth, and by it you  
will clearly discern that  
God is the most ami-  
able and lovely of all  
those whom you Love,  
and which also Love  
you; and that he is the  
true and only object of  
Love, because in him a-  
lone you will find the two  
most necessary things to  
be Lov'd; to wit, Supe-  
riority and Equality, that  
is, a great Infinity, which  
Infinity elevates him a-  
bove you, and an Infinite  
Good-

Goodness, that (as I may say) lessens him so far, as to be equal with you; thereby to bring to pass, that all his Perfections and Power, may, as it were, be able to enter into your heart, and thereby render you infinitely and eternally Happy. He alone is your Master and equal; and therefore 'tis of him, you may say with Truth, *My beloved to me, and I to him.* Notwithstanding he is God, and I am nothing; yet by an ineffable Mystery, he is fit for me, and I for  
F him.

him. His Wisdom has taken my measure upon him, and renderd my littleness capable after some manner of containing his Immensity.

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# CHAP. XVI.

*When particular Reverence is to be shown.*

**V** Herefore O holy Sunamite, in the Church, and at times of Adoration and Divine Mysteries, appear not in his Presence, but as an annihilated Shadow, by a pro-

profound Humility : But in the places, and at the times, I have before spoken of, and during your Solitary and Domestic Conversations, you are both too blame, and ungrateful, if you have not all the liberty, familiarity, and tenderness that one ought to have for a Spouse, he tenderly Loves; and at such times speak no other Language, but that of Tenderness and Love.

'Tis there he styles you his Beloved, his unspotted Dove, and even forbids

you to call him Lord and Master. Call me, says he, the God of your Heart, the Father of the Mercies you expect, the Beloved of your Hopes and Desires, the most Lovely, the most Perfect, your All, and your only One, whose Heart is but one with yours, and whose Grace enters into your Soul, to be its Life, never to be separated from it: commanding you not to call him hereafter Baalim, that is, Lord; but to call him Spouse.

C H A P. XVII

*How to Discourse with God  
concerning Himself.*

**M**oreover, during these Colloquies, do not always speak of thy self, nor of thy own Affairs, nor of thy own Comfort, or Afflictions, but Change thy Discourse, and after thou hast made thy complaints or entertain'd him with what happens in thy Household Affairs, Elevate thy Mind, and En-  
F 3      certain

tertain him, with what belongs to himself.

Speak to him of his Happiness and Greatness, of his Divine Attributes and Operations, of the power of his Word, when by it he gave a Being to all Creatures, and drew them out of their eternal nothing; speak to him in the Language of the Saints, who by Sighs and devout Exclamations shew'd their Eloquence, whilst they prais'd his Works: How admirable is thy Name! How magnificent



nificent are thy Works!  
And how profound thy  
Thoughts ! O Wisdom,  
that hast form'd this great  
World. How Sublime  
art thou, and how in-  
comprehensible in thy  
Thoughts, how profound  
art thou in thy Designs !  
How magnificent and ad-  
mirable in thy Works !  
What a vast Immensity  
do the Heavens contain,  
what a Lustre and Bright-  
ness do those uncorrup-  
tible Lights, ranged in so  
Beautiful an Order, send  
forth ! what a variety of

Goods doth the Earth produce, and the Sea, and other Elements bring forth? How great a magnificence and Beauty have all these Creatures? and how pleasing a thing it is to Contemplate them in Silence, and to let our Soul be fill'd with Admiration, and Heavenly Thoughts, whilst it considers them! Thy Power and Justice reacheth to the highest, how great things hast thou made! O God, who is like unto thee?

C H A P:

C H A P. XVIII.

*How to Treat with Him of  
his Birth and Passion.*

**B**E not forgetful also of the greatest of all his Miracles, the Incarnation of the Word, and the Redemption of Mankind. Tell him, this is the ordinary subject of your Meditation every day, as it is the subject of the Meditation of the Angels in Paradise for Eternity. O Redeemer of my Life, how often

F 5 do

do I think of them, and how sweet a repose doth the Contemplation of your Crib, and Cross, your Glorious Annihilations, bring along with them.

Hereupon call to mind such Thoughts, as occur'd, during your Meditations, or those, you have read in Books, or heard in Sermons. Recount them, as things, you cannot forbear Speaking or Meditating of, and mingle with them Acts of Love, Thanksgiving,  
Ad-

Admiration, and Faith :  
I believe those inestimable Mysteries, which your Church and Gospel Teache ; I have believed them ever since my Birth; and I say every day, and will say to the hour of my Death, that Jesus Christ Crucified is my Lord and my God. This is the first Word, they taught me in my Cradle, and I hope 'twill be the last I shall pronounce, going out of the World; and that I shall bear Engraven upon my Heart, going to  
ap.

108      *A Method of*  
*appear in Iudgment :*  
*My Lord and my God.*

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C H A P. XIX.

*How to Converse with God  
concerning the Sins of  
our past Life.*

**T**ELL him with De-  
votion, that up-  
on the Cross you do no  
less clearly behold your  
own Humiliations and the  
Disgraces of your Life,  
than the Exaltations of  
the Iustice and Goodness  
of God.

What

*Conversing with God.* 109

What I would say, is, that during these sorts of Conversations with our Saviour, you ought not to fail Entertaining him with the sins and miseries of your Youth, Speak of them to this dear Spouse; and though in your former days of Pennance you forgot not to tell him all you knew; yet be not afraid to importune him, by humbling your self in repeating the same things.

Tell him the whole Story of those miserable years, and all those sad

oc-

occasions of offending him, into which your Companions brought you. Remember each fault, Sigh and Lament it with Tears, and exercise Acts of Contrition, worthy of those Graces which the Death of your Spouse hath merited, and which have drawn you out of Hell.

That which displeaseth me, my Beloved, and above all afflicts me in these my enormous Sins, is, that my Heart is too weak to have hatred  
for



*Conversing with God.* III

for them. Alas it is very little that mine alone, and the heart of my Confessor, who hath known and deplor'd them, should be toucht with them. I wish I had the hearts of all Men and Angels, and with this multitude of Hearts, that I were able to form such a violent hatred, and detestation, as might equal my Sadness and Misery. O Lord employ your Power and Mercy: Create in me a new heart, and give it me to no other

other end , but to Love you.

This desire pleaseth our Saviour , as did the desire of *David*, *St. Peter*, and many other Penitent Sinners ; who , after they had employ'd many years in sighing and bewailing their Sins , having exhausted their Tears, asked for those who might raise in their Soul such a source of bitter Waters , that might not be exhausted, but might endure their whole Life.

*Who will give water*

*to*

to my Head, and a Fountain of Tears to my Eyes, that I may VVeep day and night? says the Royal Prophet.

Contemplating the open Veines of your Crucified Spouse; O Devout Soul, repeat the same Words, but say them sincerely and from your Heart, rather with Sighs of Love, than Words; *VVho will give VVater to my Head, &c.* O my dear Master, how happy should I be, to see Torrents of Tears flow from  
my

my Eyes , which might  
joyn themselves to the  
torrent of your Blood,  
and run together with it  
into each Corner , where  
my Sins have been com-  
mitted , to the end that  
those , who have known  
me a Sinner , may know  
me also a Penitent , and  
see eternal marks of my  
Sorrow . O all of you ,  
who have heard of the  
scandal of my Life , come  
and hearken to my Cryes  
and Lamentations , and  
behold my Sorrow ! Be-  
hold it , O my God , and  
consider ,

*Conversing with God.* 115

consider, what passeth in my Soul. I hope in you, in the state I am in; have the goodness not to refuse to Love me in it: At least, refuse not to behold me, and to let that vertue pass from your Eyes to my Soul, which gives Grace and Life. *Behold me, O God, and consider me.*

God beholds thee, O *Sunamite*; and during these holy Hours, in which thou findest thy grief and the convulsions of thy afflicted Conscience to return, he fails not to comfort

fort thee, repeating by himself Interiourly, what he hath caused the Prophets and Evangelists to tell thee, that thy Sins are pardoned and blotted out, and that the least stain of them remains not in thy Heart. This I know, O Divine Saviour, but there remains still a memory of them in thy mind.

Alas, great God, it seems little comfort to tell me I pardon you. It seems to me, that to make this comfort perfect; you should find  
some

some invention to be ignorant of what I have done, and to forget, whatever happened to me during the years of my criminal and scandalous Life.

For how is it possible to live in the presence of God, who has beheld all my Infidelities, and still remembers them? And how is it possible to be comforted by the news, they daily tell me from you, that my Sins are washt in the Blood you spilt for me, so long as I  
also

also know, that they appear yet in your sight, and will do so for an Eternity ; and that amidst the Splendours of Paradise, the Age of my Ingratitudes will be an Eternal object, *Thou hast put our Sins in thy sight, our Age in the light of thy Countenance.*

God , who beholds with pleasure this kind of holy Fears and Anxieties in your Mind , is ready to give you an entire Consolation. And when, during these familiar

liar



liar Entertainments, he Comforts you about them; he speaks as One; who by an ineffable Miracle has extended his Power so far, as to put all in Oblivion, and buried the memory of your Sins in such an Abyss, as they shall never be able to get out of: He will depose our Iniquities, and cast our Sins into the depth of the Sea, because he will have Mercy.

## C H A P. XX.

*In what manner we are  
to Treat with God in  
Scruples, and Fears of  
our Salvation, or any  
thing else.*

**B**Vt if peradventure  
that should happen  
to you, which often does  
even to most innocent  
Souls; to be troubled out  
of Fear, that some hidden  
Sin lurks still in your  
Conscience, or that God  
has a design of anger and  
Reprobation against you;  
as

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as soon as you perceive this thought, fail not to enter into your self, and to be angry, and blame your self for this disquiet, as a fault perhaps more hateful to his Wisdom and Mercy, than all the Sins you have Committed: Be asham'd of it, and resist it, as a blast from Hell, and speak of it to your Spouse with abomination and horror, detesting such a blind and criminal diffidence.

In regard also of those weakneses, which make

down

G

you

you fear the Power of Men or Devils; forming in your imagination scruples and Chimerical Ideas, which persecute you very importunately, and excite in your Soul inclinations to Despair: Take care, you permit your self not to be dejected by this importunity of the enemy. Open your Eyes, and behold, how unworthy you are, that God should Love you, whilst you let your self be frightened in this manner, and permit these fumes and shadows to have so much

*Conversing with God.* 123

much force, as to trouble you, who are beloved by God and sustain'd by his Grace, and therefore tell him.

O my beloved, what blindness and what unworthiness is this? From whence proceeds this Fear; and how can it enter into my heart to distrust you, amidst those many Miracles of your Mercy and Love towards me.

'Tis true, I have been a sinner, I came from nothing, and am Dust and Ashes; a Worm genera-

G 2

ted

ted of Filth ; But you are  
a God , an eternal Com-  
forter , an invincible Pro-  
tector of the miserable ;  
and it is you , that say to  
me : My dear Creature ,  
as nothing as thou art ,  
and as small a Worm wor-  
thy to be trampled under-  
foot , take comfort , fear  
nothing , because I am thy  
Saviour , thy Beloved , thy  
Faithful Friend ; and be-  
cause it is I , that have  
Sworn , *That the VVorld shall  
sooner perish , than that I  
should permit thee to do so ;  
or , that the Devils should  
take*

*take thee out of my hand,  
or the least evil happen to  
thee, so long as thou conti-  
nuest in my Love.*

You tell me this, O  
most powerfully Merciful,  
and yet I cease not  
to tremble: Mad and  
Senseless that I am, your  
Prophet assures me, that  
you keep me on your  
Knee, as a tender Mother  
does her only Infant, and  
tenderly embrace me with  
the like transports of  
Love, hiding me in your  
Breast, as she doth her  
Beloved, carrying me al-

so in your Arms, as a Father doth his Son, not able yet to go alone; and that you will, if I hinder it not, in this manner support me to the end of my Life, though I should arrive to never so great an Age. You tell me this, my God; I hear it, I know, it is you, that speak, and yet I ask you, if you Love me, if you think of me, if you take notice of my Tears, and if you hear my Voice: And after the many Promises, which you have made me,



me, as if they were made by a feeble and faithless Man, I continue to fear; and so to offend the adorable Truth of your Word, and of your Love by my inconsiderate disquiets. Ah, my God, I detest them from hence forward, and will use my utmost endeavours to force them out of my Heart, and not to let any thing remain within me, that carries with it such an unworthy and criminal diffidence. Ah my God, let me sooner perish, than

offend you by fearing, and trembling under the shadow of your protection. Sustain'd by you, and elevated above all, that is mortal or created; I fear nothing, I hope in none, nor love any thing, but you.

To assist you the better to confirm this comfort and confidence in your Heart, recount often the most remarkable Benefits, you have received from God, and the occasions you are conscious of, wherein he hath express'd his particular goodness towards

wards you. Repeat all these to him, and remember, there are three Histories, which your Spouse hears very willingly, and that you need not fear to repeat them 100. often; wherefore make them the ordinary subject of your Domestick Entertainments; the History of your sinful Life, the History of your Redemption, and his Death upon Mount *Calvary*; and infine, the History of all his Conduct towards you, and the miraculous Succors you have  
re-

received from his Providence in all those occasions, wherein you were in danger to perish, and at this very hour, in which you speak to him, if he had not had pity of you, and heard your Voice in those miserable occasions you know of, you had been lost for all Eternity. 'Tis you, my God, who reach'd out your Hand, and drew me out of the depth of Sin and Misery. 'Tis you, have dry'd up my Tears, and broken my Chains. Pardon my In-

Ingratitude, and heal my  
Infirmity, and Diseases,  
who hast given me Health,  
Hope, and Grace, hast  
Crown'd me with Be-  
nedictions, and heap'd thy  
Benefits upon me, and hast  
revealed to me the secrets  
of thy Wisdom, and most  
sublime Truths of thy  
Gospel; and from that mi-  
serable state, I was in,  
which had brought me to  
the Gates of Hell, and  
even into the hands of  
Devils, hast elevated me  
to the rank and condition  
of Angels, Bless the Lord,  
O

O my Soul, and forget not his Benefits.

In fine, speak to him of all things, and endeavour the most intimate familiarity, and secret Communications, which one Friend can have with another, Exercise them boldly, O Devout Soul, and fear nothing more, than to be afraid, or tremble in his presence, whom nothing so displeaseth in his Saints, as the fears of diffidence, and the disquiets of a fearful and Pusillanimous Soul.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

*How God, whilst we speak  
to him, doth silently speak  
to our Heart.*

**T**hat, which is most  
advantageous in  
these sort of Conversati-  
ons with God; is, that  
though it seems, that so  
long as you entertain him,  
he lets you speak without  
speaking himself, or an-  
swering you, yet never-  
theless it is not so.

There is a certain  
voice, which is proper  
only

only to himself, and without the knowledge of your interior Faculties, even whilst your imagination understands nothing, Prints in your Soul such Verities, as his Love would have you know. You feel imperceptibly to rise in your mind such **T**houghts, as comfort you, and extinguish your Fears; Lights, that dissipate your Doubts and Apprehensions; Reflections, which discover to you, what you are to do, and which teach you the  
certain



certain means, how you may happily regulate all your Designs.

It is much, that he hears you: But when you speak to him with this respectful confidence, he cannot forbear answering, and comforting you: He does it not by forming words in the Air, but by applying his Lights, his Thoughts and his Sweetnesses to your Heart. 'Tis his Heart which speaks to his Spouse's, and 'tis a Language, they understand.

F I N I S.

Compassion with God. 112

certain means, how you  
may happily receive all  
your blessings.

Let's pray, that he hears  
you: But when you speak  
to him with this respect-

ful confidence, he cannot  
forget. **7 AP 66** and

comforting you: He does  
it not by forming words

in his Air, but by ap-  
plying his riches, his

Thoughts and his sweet-  
ness to your Heart. His

Heart which speaks to  
his Spouse, and is a

Language, they under-  
stand.

112 V I 3.

